Statio amoena

Sostare e vivere
lungo le strade romane

a cura di

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Mansiones and *cursus publicus* in the Roman Empire

Abstract

*Augustus created a system of state transport (*vehiculatio / cursus publicus*) in order to facilitate communication between the emperor and the military and administrative officials over the Empire, as well as for travel and transport on government business. Only authorised travellers had to be provided with means of transport and free accommodation at the expense of the local population. The system created by Augustus thus built on a Republican model as far as the requisition of the means of transportation and accommodation was concerned. Eventually, it was enlarged and established as an institution organised by the cities of the Empire. As regards accommodation, it is assumed that on the one hand existing inns were used while the local population bore the cost. On the other hand, new facilities were built especially for this purpose. The paper examines the use and establishment of these road houses of the* cursus publicus. *The research is mainly based on epigraphic sources, supplemented by corresponding archaeological findings.*

The abuse of the state transport system was an inherent problem. Often enough, unauthorised travellers demanded the privilege of free transportation and accommodation. Officials exacted additional services that were not covered by the system, such as food and guidance among others. Roman rulers reacted to this malpractice by re-enacting the same rules at regular intervals, as is clear from various inscriptions and from the collection of rules regarding the cursus publicus in the Theodosian Code. New documents found during the last decade confirm these well known rules. Lodging was free on official business, but provisions had to be purchased by travellers themselves. Furthermore, only the rest houses and inns dedicated to the transport system were to be used. Private homes or inns in cities far from the main road (via publica) were not to be bothered with illegal requests.

The creation and extension of the cursus publicus demanded the establishment of permanent rest-stations along the roads, which made the functioning of the system easier and to some extent could reduce the abuse of other resources by travellers. In more densely populated districts, existing infrastructure such as taverns and inns were certainly used for the cursus publicus. In open country and remote regions, however, roadhouses had to be built from scratch. Although our documentation is sparse we know that these efforts were only sporadically subsidised by the emperor but mainly built at the cost of the local population. In sparsely populated regions the emperor was even compelled to found a new settlement, which was then made responsible for the maintenance of facilities for travellers.

The construction and endowment of road stations for the cursus publicus were not uniform. Therefore such rest houses vary in form from peristyle houses to caves in the bedrock. Until recently, not much has been known about the equipment such a building needed to be furnished with. A newly found inscription and corresponding excavation finds (from ancient Macedonian Dion) now shed light on these details. The sources elucidate the number of travellers which could be accommodated with food and shelter in this establishment: at least 25 persons could stay the night, divided into ordinary and select clientele. Other sources (from Egypt) detail large groups of travellers and the maximum capacity of up to 90 travellers served on a single day.

KEY WORDS: TRANSPORT, *CURSUS PUBLICUS*, *MANSIONES*, COMMUNICATION, ACCOMODATION, INNS

1. Introduction

'*Imperator Caesar Hadrianus Augustus*... built the new *via Hadriana* from Berenike to Antinoopolis through safe and level terrain to the Red Sea spaced with many wells, stations and garrisons...'.[1]
By commissioning the *via Hadriana* in 137 A.D., the emperor connected Antinoopolis on the Nile to the Red Sea,

spanning 700 kilometres in the process. The rhetoric of the text suggests that Hadrian thereby meant to demonstrate his ability to overcome the hostile nature of the eastern desert by asserting that the region was safe, level, and easily traversable thanks to a fair amount of way stations.[2]
In reality, however, the road seems to have remained quite insignificant, since no Roman itinerary mentions it. The route was both climatically and economically problematic. Water was extremely scarce here (com-

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[1] IGRR II 1142 = OGIS 701 = I. Pan. 80: Αὐτοκράτωρ Καῖσαρ, θεοῦ / [Τραιαν]οῦ Παρθικοῦ υἱός, / θεοῦ Νέρουα υἱωνός [Τ]ραιανὸς / Ἀδριανὸς Σεβαστός, ἀρχιερεὺς / μέγιστος, δημαρχικῆς ἐξουσίας / τὸ κα΄, αὐτο- / κράτωρ τὸ β΄, / ὕπατος τὸ γ΄, πατὴρ πατρίδος, / ὁδὸν καινὴν Ἀδριανὴν / ἀπὸ / Βερενίκης εἰς Ἀντινόου διὰ / τόπων ἀσφαλῶν καὶ ὁμαλῶν / παρὰ / τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν / ὑδρεύμασιν ἀφθόνοις καὶ / σταθμοῖς καὶ / φρουρίοις δι- / ειλημμένην [ἀν]έτεμεν / ἔτους κα΄, Φαμενὼθα΄.

[2] On the road and the open question of its importance see Young 2001, 69-71; Graeff 2004, 139-141; Adams 2007, 42, who suggests that despite the military and administrative functions of the road, it might also have served to establish Hadrian as following in footsteps of Trajan, who also built connecting routes through deserts, in order to demonstrate his power over provincial landscapes.

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FIG. 1. AE 1961, 318 (LORENZ HOLLENSTEIN).

pared with the more southerly routes from Koptos) and it did not directly connect to any important trading port. Nevertheless, the building inscription shows that the way stations were of integral importance to the vast net of imperial or public roads (*viae publicae)* that spanned the whole Empire.[3]

When emperors commissioned such roads or took a particular interest in them, they might themselves take charge of establishing such *mansiones.* In this case, they were primarily intended to provide services to travellers on official business, who were also allowed to use the state transportation service (*vehiculatio* or *cursus publicus).* Similar inscriptions indicate that there existed different types of stations with substantially varying designations. This variation was not only regional – as the *hydreumata* attest – but also and above all temporal: up to the later 3rd century, the way stations of the *cursus*

publicus are neither uniformly nor even regularly identified by the terms *mansio* and *mutatio*.[4]

My contribution begins with a short review of the mechanics of the *cursus publicus* during the imperial period, subsequently concentrating more narrowly on the establishment and equipment of way stations. In keeping with the time period under discussion here, my focus lies on the documentary, i.e. primarily epigraphic, sources; the legal texts in the Theodosian Code are left aside.

2. Mechanics of the *cursus publicus*

Augustus created a system of state transport primarily to facilitate communication between the emperor and the administrative and military officials over the Empire, as well as for travel and transport on government business. The expression *cursus publicus* is mentioned by our sources only from the late third century A.D. onward. Yet, it is consistently used by modern scholars for the former period too, even though *vehiculatio* seems to have been the term used to describe the imperial communication system during the first two centuries A.D.[5] Upkeep of the *cursus publicus* depended on the population living along the main routes of communication. They were required to provide travellers on official business with means of transportation without delay.

The genesis of this system is described by *Suetonius*, who shows that Augustus initially created a system of couriers who took over from each other during journeys over long distances.[6] Later, the first emperor expanded the system into a fully functional transportation service by arranging for means of transport to be available at regular intervals along the major routes. There wagons and animals could be used in turn by those authorised (with a *diploma)* to take advantage of the *cursus publicus*.

Clear confirmation of Augustus' reform is provided by an inscription from the early years of Tiberius' reign which contains an edict of the governor of the province of Galatia, *Sex. Sotidius Strabo Libuscidianus*.[7] It details the workings of this transport system. An order for the requisitioning of resources was imposed on the local population, for which they were reimbursed based on centrally determined rates. Only certain individuals travelling on government business were permitted to use the service: those in possession of a *diploma,* and those passing through from other provinces on military or imperial business. In addition, authorised travellers had to be provided with free accommodation, which further increased the financial burden on the local population. One must assume that existing inns were used

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[3] For an overview on Roman roads and their administration see Kolb 2014.

[4] Kolb 2000, 210-213; now see Leveau 2014 and Crogiez-Pétrequin 2014 with no additional literary or ephigraphic souces, but insights on archaeology or the use of terminology in the Code of Justinian.

[5] For the term *vehiculatio* see CIL III 6075 = IvEph 820: *praef(ectus) vehiculationis*; BMCRE III 21-22 no. 119. On the mechanics of the *cursus publicus* see Kolb 2000, 49-226.

[6] Suet. *Aug.* 49.3.

[7] AE 1976, 653 = SEG 26, 1392; Mitchell 1976; Kolb 2000, 55-64; 71-80.

while the local population bore the costs, or that new ones were built for this purpose.

The system created by Augustus thus built on a Republican model where the requisition of the means of transportation and accommodation was concerned, yet it was enlarged and established as an institution organised by the cities of the empire.

Travellers often did not obey the rules and instead exacted more than their fair share from the population, as becomes apparent in the edict from Galatia. This resulted in provincial subjects sending letters of complaint to the emperor.[8] Roman rulers apparently reacted by re-enacting the same rules at regular intervals, as is clear from various inscriptions and from the collection of rules regarding the *cursus publicus* in the Theodosian Code.[9]

Until recently, the Tiberian edict from Galatia was the only documentary evidence from the imperial period to reveal specific details of the workings of the *cursus publicus*. Today, however, three new documents are known that confirm these regulations and simultaneously shed light on the additional burden borne by the population due to illegal demands by travellers.

Two edicts of Hadrian – from Thracia and Asia minor[10] – and a dossier with letters by a high-ranking officials – found in Macedonia – from the 3rd or 4th century react to the abuse of the system by travelling magistrates.[11] In stating the above mentioned general rules about the use of the *cursus publicus* the emperor and his delegates try to prevent further misuse. Therefore, Hadrian decreed in Asia minor that transport should only be given to travellers with a *diploma* and that fixed prices had to be paid for food for humans and animals alike; lodging was free, but only on official business; the use of guides – in order to stay on the right way – was forbidden, the sole exception being times of heavy snowfall.[12]

Furthermore, the emperor's regulations shed light on abuse on the part of the local population who had to provide the necessary services to official travellers. Obviously, they sometimes tended to overcharge users of the *cursus publicus* for their duties. Provisions, for instance, had to be purchased by travellers at a price that was current on the market ten days earlier. Extra charges for wheels or services could be demanded as well.[13]

With regards to the question of accommodation, the Hadrianic document from Thracian Maroneia is more interesting. The circumstances and content of the text can

in short be reconstructed as follows:[14] in 132 A.D. Hadrian heard about abuses of Roman officials in Abdera and Maroneia during his stop there on his return journey from the East. Free transportation and accommodation were demanded by travellers not only on the road from Maroneia to Philippi but also for the passage to Samothrake. Clearly illegal was also the demand to be accommodated in the city. As Hadrian's edict states, the travellers were not supposed to rest in the inns inside the city, since they were not actually situated on the *via publica*. Instead, they were to use the way stations outside the city which were specially intended for use by travellers on official business. Having them stay in the city seems to have offered more opportunities for abuse, opportunities that were to be minimised.

3. Establishment and endowment of road stations for the *cursus publicus*

Given that not only animals and waggons had to be provided by the cities whose territories were touched by the *viae publicae*, but free overnight accommodation as well, the establishment of permanent rest-stations along the roads made the functioning of the system easier and to some extent reduced the abuse of other resources by travellers. In more densely populated districts existing infrastructure such as taverns and inns were certainly also used for the *cursus publicus*. In open country and remote regions, however, roadhouses had to be built from scratch.

These efforts were only sporadically subsidised by the emperor. As we have seen for Egypt and the new *via Hadriana* emperors could provide such buildings as part of a new road-building project.

In the province of Thracia roadhouses were supplied as an imperial building project sometime after the establishment of the province in 45 A.D. Three identical building inscriptions from different locations bear witness to this, showing how in 61 A.D. Nero had his *procurator T. Iulius Ustus* build several inns along the *viae militares* in the province:... *tabernas et praetoria / per vias militares / fieri iussit per / T(itum) Iulium Ustum proc(uratorem) / provinciae Thrac(iae)* – 'He (Nero) ordered inns and quarters to be established along the military roads through (the intervention of) *T. Iulius Ustus*, procurator of the province of Thracia' [fig. 2].[15]

One of these roadhouses, situated on the road from Philippopolis to the Danube**,** has been excavated. Archaeological evidence suggests that it was a large building of 792 square metres consisting of a peristyle sur-

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8   Herrmann 1990; Hauken 1998; Kolb 2000, 76-81; Jones 2011.

9   Cod. *Theod.* 8.5; Kolb 2000, 117-122.

10   SEG 55, 744 = AE 2005, 1348 (Maroneia, Thracia 132 A.D.) = Jones 2011; SEG 59, 1365 = AE 2009, 1428 (Mykale Peninsula, Asia 129 A.D.) = Hauken/Malay 2009.

11   SEG 59, 617 (Pella, Macedonia 3rd/4th cent. A.D.) consisting of the last part of an edict, two letters of officials and beginning of a letter of protest of the city of Pella; see now with text edition Gounaropoulou, Hatzopoulos, Paschidis 2015, 640-644, no. 432.

12   SEG 59, 1365 = AE 2009, 1428 (Mykale Peninsula, Asia 129 A.D.)

13   SEG 59, 1365 = AE 2009, 1428 (Mykale Peninsula, Asia 129 A.D.) l. 33-35: καταλύσεις δημο/ σία⟨ι⟩ διδ⟨ό⟩σθωσαν καὶ ἀγορὰ τιμῆς / ἥτις ἦν πρὸ δέκα ἡμερῶν; Kolb 2000, 121-122.

14   SEG 55, 744 = AE 2005, 1348 (Maroneia, Thracia 132 A.D.) = Jones 2011.

15   CIL III 6123 = 14207,34 (Mihilci): *[[[Ner]o C[la]ud[iu]s]] / divi Claudi f(ilius) / Germ(anici) Caesaris n(epos) / Ti(beri) Caesaris Aug(usti) / pron(epos) divi Aug(usti) abn(epos) / Caesar Aug(ustus) Germ(anicus) / pontif(ex) max(imus) trib(unicia) pot(estate) / VIII imp(erator) VIII co(n)s(ul) IIII / p(ater) p(atriae) / tabernas et praetoria / per vias militares / fieri iussit per / T(itum) Iulium Ustum proc(uratorem) / provinciae Thrac(iae)*; AE 1912, 193 (Butchino); AE 1999, 1397 = IGBulg V 5691 (Ihtiman); cf. Christol 1998, 792-797.
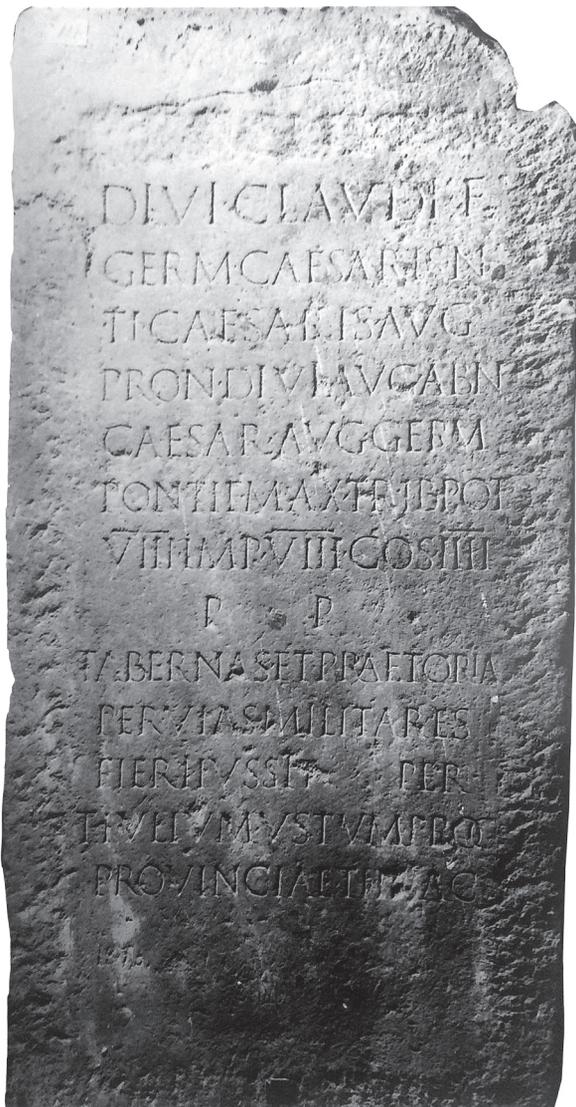
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FIG. 2. CIL III 6123 (LORENZ HOLLENSTEIN).

travellers were allowed to shelter free of expense in the stations of the *cursus publicus*.

The next epigraphic example stems from the province of Galatia. There the emperor Trajan felt the need to supplement the network of road stations along the *via Sebaste* in the years 100-103 A.D. For this purpose, he ordered his governor *Orfitasius Aufidius Umbrus* to build a new roadhouse with porticoes.[19]

Several provincial governors did likewise.[20] A further interesting example is provided by the governor of *Mesopotamia* and *Osrhoena* of 260 A.D., who had three caves carved out of the rock at Mesopotamian *Batnae* (seventeen km south-west of *Edessa*, modern Urfa), along the Roman road between *Batnae* (Suruç) and *Edessa*. That these caves served as an inn with a resting place for travellers and with stables, primarily providing shelter against the heat prevalent in this region, seems very convincing.[21] However, it has since been proposed that the travellers rested in a separate, unattested structure on the platform in front of the caves. The caves, equipped with low troughs, are interpreted as stables.[22] In general, these findings are well in line with the text of the building inscription, in which the governor states to have built an inn, a well and caves for refreshment and repose of the travellers.[23] Yet, the location of the building inscription seems to suggest an alternative view. The epigraphic document is situated above the entrance of the central cave. It is thus reasonable that the caves were used by the travellers, not excluding the use of the platform itself to which the identified signs of a roofed porch obviously lead.[24]

rounded by several rooms.[16] A later inscription shows that its *stabula* had to be restored by Marcus Aurelius at his own expense (175-180 A.D.).[17]

Imperial investment in the construction and reconstruction of way stations is not documented often. As we have seen the Thracian station was built next to a military road, i.e. a public road used by military and official travellers such as the *militantes,* the only legal users of the *cursus publicus* mentioned in the edict of the Galatian governor.[18] The connection between these facilities and the state transport system becomes evident. Only official

[16] Madzarov 1985.
[17] AE 1961, 318 (Dolnite-Stenici/Mihilci): *Imp(erator) Caesar / divi Veri frater / divi Antonini Pii / filius divi Hadri/ani nepos divi Tra/iani pronepos di/vi Nervae abne/pos M(arcus) Aurelius / Antoninus Augu/stus Germanicus / Sarmaticus pon/tifex maximus / tribuniciae pot(estatis) / co(n)s(ul) IIII pat(er) pat(riae) / stabula vetusta/te dilap-sa a solo / sua pecunia resti/tuit.*
[18] AE 1976, 653 = SEG 26, 1392; for the denomination of the *viae publicae* as *viae militares* see the summary of Rathmann 2003, 23-41; Speidel 2004.

[19] AE 1979, 620 (Fele-Yassibel, Galatia): *Imp(erator) Caes(ar) Nerva divi / Nervae f(ilius) Traianus Aug(ustus) Ger(manicus) pontif(ex) / max(imus) trib(unicia) pot(estate) co(n)s(ul) IIII p(ater) p(atriae) Q(uintus) Orfitasius / Aufidius Umbrus leg(atus) Aug(usti) pro pr(aeto-re) / tabernam cum porticibus a novo fecit*
[20] See the following and CIL VIII 4517 (Zraia, Numidia): *Pro salute Imp(eratoris) [Caes(aris) ---] / [[---]] P(ii) F(elicis) Aug(usti) [---] / co(n)s(ulis) V patri(s) pa[triae ---] / [[------]] / praetorium F[---] / extruxit et de[dicavit] / C(aio) Iulio Romano [---]*; AE 1992, 892 (Marubiu, Sicilia): *[D]omini n(ostri) [M(arci) Au]reli [Antonini] / [---] propter compendium itiner[is] / [---] commeantiu[m -] Aurelius / [---proc(urator) Au]g(usti) pra[ef(ectus) p]rov(inciae) Sard(iniae) prae-torium / [---]so pecunia publica / [---]e civitatis Forotraianensium / [re]stituit dedicavitque*; CIL X 7200 (*Thermae Selinuntiae*, Sicilia): *Pro beatitudine / temporum dd(ominorum) nn(ostrorum) / Constanti et / Constantis Aauugg(ustorum) / stationem a solo fece/runt Vitrasius Orfitus et Fl(avius) / Dulcitius vv(iri) cc(larissimi) consulares / p(ro-vinciae) S(iciliae) instante Fl(avio) Valeriano / ducenario agente in reb(us) et p(rae)p(osito) cursus / publici*; AE 1946, 207 (*Syracusa*, Sicilia): *Salvo d(omino) n(ostro) [---] / Fl(avius) Gelasius Busiris v(ir) c(larissimus) [cons(ularis)] / praetorium sine ullius [auxilio(?) ---] / tot diebus quibus alii mensibus [---]*; Kolb 2000, 137, 146-151.
[21] Petersen 1977, 281-282.
[22] Mango 1986, 224-226, 230.
[23] SEG 36, 1277 = SEG 57, 1771 (near Edessa, Mesopotamia) with correction for the title of the governor by Speidel 2009, 204 fn. 125: Αὐρ(ήλιος) Δάσιος ὁ διασημό(τατος) ἔπαρχ[ος Μεσπ(οταμίας κ]αὶ Ὀσρ(οηνῆς) ὅτε τὴν κατὰ / Βάτνας τειχοποιείαν [ἀ]νοικοδόμησεν καὶ ἐν τούτῳ τῷ τόπῳ / πανδοκεῖον καὶ φρ[έαρ καὶ] σπήλαια κατεσκεύασεν ἵνα οἱ δι/ειόντες ἀνάψυξ[ι]ν κ[αὶ ἀνά]λ[ημ]ψιν ἔχωσιν. The inscription was originally bilingual, but from the latin version on the left side remain only few words and letters according to Mango 1986, 228: [A]VR-DASSIVS [---]E[---] / OS[R]QVANDO (vac.?) / [---]T[---]ENC[---] TSPER[---] / CAVIT (vac.?) / [---]ES.
[24] Mango 1986, 224.

In sparsely populated regions the emperor was even compelled to found a new settlement, which was then made responsible for the maintenance of facilities for travellers. Such a scenario is reported for Thracia by the charter of the newly founded emporium of *Pizos* (modern Cakarlar near Cirpan, Bulgaria). As the inscription shows, in the year 202 A.D. Septimius Severus attended to the provision of staging posts (σταθμοί) in the provinces. He, therefore, obliged the verun settlers to maintain the roadhouse there – in turn privileging them with the exemption from certain dues.[25]

As mentioned above the local communities were responsible for the functioning and the upkeep of road houses. That such facilities were built and rebuilt by local magistrates or communities, however, is attested only by a few inscriptions.[26] In Dalmatian Scardona three communities partnered with each other to fund the restoration of a *praetorium* under the supervision of the governor:[27]

Praetoriu[m vetustate] / conlapsum [Stulpini et?] / Burnistae [Lacinien]/ses(?) ex pec(unia) [publ(ica) refecer(unt)] / Scapul[a Tertullus] / leg(atus) Augg(ustorum) p[rov(inciae) Dalmatiae] / restit[uit].

Similarly, in the Syrian village Phaena the community was equipped with a guest house, wherefore the governor confirmed that soldiers or other travellers did not have the right to take quarters in private homes.[28]

Private initiative in building roadhouses is documented by rare inscriptions as a form of municipal euergetism borne by the local elite. In the Lycian city of *Arneai* a local couple invested their money in such a structure for travellers.[29] Likewise acted a family in the province of Macedonia at the ancient city of *Dion* (modern Dio, south of Katerini, Greece): They financed the building of a roadhouse for the community as a benefaction. This fact reveals the impending obligation to the state and therefore the use of the structure for the *cursus publicus*. The equipment such a building needed to have is now for the first time illustrated

by an inscription and by excavation finds. The epigraph describes the contents of such an establishment, called a *praetorium*, in interesting detail:[30]

'On the orders of *P. Mestrius Pomponianus Capito*, son of *Gaius*, of the Palatine tribe, *duovir*, and of *Mestria Aquilina*, daughter of *Gaius*, priestess of Minerva, *C. Mestrius Priscus Maianus*, son of *Gaius*, of the Palatine tribe, and *Numerius Mestrius*, son of *Gaius*, of the Palatine tribe (set up) an inn with two rooms and the furniture which is listed below: 5 sleeping couches, 5 mattresses, 5 pillows, 10 benches, 2 armchairs, a bronze dining couch, 3 cushions, 3 mattresses (*hemitylia*), 3 long pillows, an iron hearth, 20 tables, 20 folding beds, 20 mattresses. All of these things they have taken care to do at their own expense for the inhabitants of the colony and likewise they dedicated it.'

The *praetorium* thus consisted of an inn with attached structures which served for overnight accommodation as well as dining – shown by the furnishings and the provision of sleeping couches, mattresses, pillows and cushions, tables and folding beds, armchairs, dining couch and the iron hearth for cooking. As the excavator Pandermalis points out, the archaeological remains of the building correspond exactly to the furniture named by the inscription with five comfortable sleeping beds (*lecti cubiculari*) for five rooms of the eastern wing of the building and the bronze *triclinium* for the middle room of the western wing, probably a deluxe dining room for a select clientele; the remaining simpler furniture of 20 ordinary beds, mattresses and tables for the remaining two rooms were probably intended to be used by ordinary travellers. Other installations for the needs of the travellers, such as baths and public toilets, were near by the building.

Two Egyptian papyri from the mid-fourth century detail how large such facilities had to be and how the inventory was used. Theses texts show that *mansiones* provided travellers on state business with food and with hay for their animals.[31] These accounts from two *mansiones* in the *Oxyrhynchus* district (*Oxyrhynchus* and *Tacona*) list in detail how much food and hay was supplied to soldiers and officials – including their entourages -, whose names are given. The groups of travellers could range from two persons to large groups of up to 52. But the maximum capacity on a single day, which one of these roadhouses had to be able to keep up to, could be even larger: 90 travellers.[32]

[25] SIG² 880 = IGRR I 766 = IGBulg III/2 1690, esp. l. 66ff.; Kolb 2000, 128-129, 185-186.

[26] See the following and possibly CIL IX 4195 (*Amiternum*): *V(ibius) C(-) et Acri / Derata ---] / L(ucius) Caeliu[s ----] / praetori[um faciendum cu]/raverun[t idemque proba]/verun[t]*; CIL VIII 5341 (Calama, Africa proconsularis): *Beatissimis temporibus dominorum nostroru[m Honori] / et Theodosi semper et ubique vincentium administrante Pompe[io Proculo] / v(iro) c(larissimo) amplissimoque proconsule et Thersio Crispino Megethio v(iro) c(larissimo) le[gato ---] / Valentinus vir honestissimus curator re(i) p(ublicae) locum rui[nis obsi]/tum qui antea squalore et sordibus foedabatur ad ne[cessa]/rium usum et ad peregrinorum hospitalitatem in meliorem [faciem(?)] / ad tecti fastigium propria pecunia reformavit felicit[er]*; AE 1955, 52 (Bu Aradah, Africa proconsularis): *Eminentissimo s(a)eculo / ddd(ominorum) nnn(ostrorum) Valentinia/no Valenti Gratia/no n(obilissimo) p(uero) semper AAA(u)ggg(ustis) / administrante Petronio Cla/udio v(iro) c(larissimo) pro(consule) et legatis eius / cc(larissimis) vv(iris) pr(a)etorium pulcherri/mum a fundamentis instru/ctum Ful(vius) Quodvul(t)deus / cur(ator) r(ei) p(ublicae) instanti<a> su<a> cum / universo ordine perfe(c)t(um) / [dedi]cavit feliciter*; Kolb 2000, 136-138.

[27] CIL III 2809.

[28] IGRR III 1119 (183/185) = IGLS XV 13 .

[29] IGRR III 639 = TAM II 759 (112/117).

[30] AE 2000, 1295 (Dion, Macedonia): *Ex mandatis / P(ubli) Mestri C(ai) f(ilii) Pal(atina) Pomponiani Capitonis II[viri] / Mestriae C(ai) f(iliae) Aquilinae sacerdotis Minervae / C(aius) Mestrius C(ai) f(ilius) Pal(atina) Priscus Maianus N(umerius) Mestrius C(ai) f(ilius) / Pal(atina) Priscus praetorium cum tabernis duabus / et apparatura ea quae infra scripta est / lectis cubicularibus V culcitis V pulvinis V / subselis X cathedris II triclinio aerato culci/tis III emitulis III pulvinis longis III foco ferreo / mensis XX grabattis XX emitulis XX haec omnia / colonis de sua pecunia faciendum curaverunt / idemque dedic(averunt)*; Pandermalis 2002, 104-107.

[31] P. Oxy. LX 4087-8.

[32] Daris 2009, 250.

4. Conclusion

Textual evidence – in inscriptions or papyri – for accommodation and roadhouses used in the *cursus publicus* is quite rare. Given that free overnight accommodation was part of the system of state transportation, existing inns seem to have been used in the main, but new stations along the roads also had to be built where they were needed. In principle, this was an obligation of the cities, which is why these building activities are only poorly documented. Emperors, governors or local benefactors could, however, further supplement the network of roadhouses under varying circumstances and for different reasons.

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